## Matching Texts to Readers

### Level A (DRA 1)

**Text Descriptions**
- One line of text (focus on print, directionality)
- Large spaces between words
- Sentence structure is similar to students’ language
- Repeated pattern
- Includes basic sight words
- Punctuation includes periods, question marks, and exclamation marks
- Pictures are highly supportive
- Topics are familiar to children
- Focus on a single idea

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Understands familiar concepts in stories and illustrations
- Differentiates print from pictures
- Holds the book and turns pages from left to right
- Reads words from left to right
- Begins to match word-by-word, pointing with one finger under words
- Locates both known and new words
- Remembers and uses language patterns
- Relates the book to his/her experience

### Level B (DRA 2)

**Text Descriptions**
- Two lines of text
- Large spaces between words
- Sentences increase in length
- Sentence structure is similar to students’ language
- Repeated words or pattern
- Includes more basic sight words
- Includes some word endings (e.g., s, ed, ing)
- Punctuation includes periods, question marks, exclamation marks, and some commas
- Simple dialogue
- Pictures are highly supportive
- Topics are familiar to children
- Focus on a simple idea
- Setting is present, but seldom a plot

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Demonstrates control of left-to-right movement and return sweep
- Begins to control word-by-word matching across two lines of text, pointing with one finger
- Notices and interprets detail in pictures
- Talks about ideas in the text
- Remembers and uses language patterns in text
- Uses knowledge of high-frequency words to check on reading
- Uses word-by-word matching to check on reading
- Notices mismatches in meaning or language
- Uses visual information, such as the first letter of the word, to read known and new words
- Pays close attention to print
- Notices features of letters and words
- Begins to self-monitor, noticing mismatches in meaning or language
- Rereads to confirm or figure out new words

### Level C (DRA 3-4)

**Text Descriptions**
- Increased number of words and lines of text
- Large spaces between words
- Sentences increase in length and may include some embedded clauses
- Sentence structure is similar to students’ language
- Some books have repeated words or pattern
- Most books are about eight pages
- Pictures are highly supportive (Students cannot rely on patterns and pictures to read with accuracy.)
- Includes more basic sight words and some compound words
- Includes word endings (e.g., s, ed, ing)

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Demonstrates control of left-to-right directionality and word-by word matching across several lines of print
- Begins to track print with eyes
- Rereads to solve problems, such as figuring out new words
- Demonstrates awareness of punctuation by pausing and using some phrasing
- Uses picture details to help figure out words
- Remembers and uses language patterns in text
- Rereads to confirm or figure out new words
- Solves some new words independently
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level D (DRA 6)</th>
<th>Text Descriptions</th>
<th>Behaviors to Notice and Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for decoding simple words</td>
<td>Longer, more complex stories</td>
<td>Remembers language patterns and repeating events over longer stretches of text</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punctuation includes periods, question marks, exclamation marks, and commas</td>
<td>Some compound sentences conjoined by “and”</td>
<td>Self-corrects, using visual information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dialogue is frequently included</td>
<td>Simple plot but may include several elaborate episodes</td>
<td>Controls directionality and word-by-word matching with eyes, using finger only at points of difficulty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics are familiar to children</td>
<td>Topics are familiar, but may include abstract or unfamiliar ideas</td>
<td>Searches for understanding while reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Characters and story plots are straightforward</td>
<td>Text layout is easy to follow, but font size may vary</td>
<td>Remembers details from the text and pictures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiential books—events and artifacts of everyday life</td>
<td>Texts range from ten to twenty pages</td>
<td>Pays close attention to words and their structural features (for example, endings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pictures begin to extend meaning of text</td>
<td>Reads fluently, with phrasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>New punctuation may be included (i.e., dashes, ellipses)</td>
<td>Rereads to confirm or figure out new words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Larger number of high frequency words/greater variety</td>
<td>Solves new words using knowledge of sound/letter relationships and word parts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Includes more word endings, compound words, and multisyllable words</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More opportunities for decoding words with familiar patterns</td>
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</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level E (DRA 8)</th>
<th>Text Descriptions</th>
<th>Behaviors to Notice and Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sentences include more embedded phrases and clauses</td>
<td>Sentences include more embedded phrases and clauses</td>
<td>Tracks print with eyes except at points of difficulty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More variety in language including some literary language</td>
<td>More variety in language including some literary language</td>
<td>Uses language syntax and meaning to read fluently, with phrasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topics range beyond the familiar</td>
<td>Topics range beyond the familiar</td>
<td>Demonstrates awareness of punctuation by pausing, phrasing, and reading with inflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre include realistic fiction, fantasy, and nonfiction (simple information books)</td>
<td>Genre include realistic fiction, fantasy, and nonfiction (simple information books)</td>
<td>Rereads to self-monitor or self-correct phrasing and expression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Font size may vary</td>
<td>Font size may vary</td>
<td>Recognizes many words quickly and automatically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texts range from ten to twenty pages</td>
<td>Texts range from ten to twenty pages</td>
<td>Figures out some longer words by taking them apart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text structure is more complex, often with several simple episodes</td>
<td>Text structure is more complex, often with several simple episodes</td>
<td>Relates texts to others previously read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More characters, but not very developed</td>
<td>More characters, but not very developed</td>
<td>Reads for meaning but checks with the visual aspects of print (letters, sounds, words)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Picture support is moderate</td>
<td>Picture support is moderate</td>
<td>Rereads to search for meaning and accuracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase number of words and lines of print</td>
<td>Increase number of words and lines of print</td>
<td>Remembers details and uses them to clarify meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater variety of high frequency words</td>
<td>Greater variety of high frequency words</td>
<td>Demonstrates understanding by talking about text after reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequent dialogue and full range of punctuation</td>
<td>Frequent dialogue and full range of punctuation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More multisyllable words and less common spelling patterns</td>
<td>More multisyllable words and less common spelling patterns</td>
<td></td>
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### Level F (DRA 10)

**Text Descriptions**
- Language reflects patterns that are more characteristic of written language than spoken language
- Concepts are more distant from local knowledge or the everyday world
- Some texts have abstract ideas which require discussion
- Themes emerge
- Genres include realistic fiction, human and animal fantasy, simple folktales, an nonfiction (informational texts)

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Tracks print with eyes, using the hand only at points of difficulty
- Demonstrates awareness of punctuation by pausing, phrasing, and reading with reflection
- Uses syntax of written language to figure out new words and their meaning
- Uses sound/letter relationships, word parts, and other visual information to figure out new words
- Uses know words to figure out new words
- Uses multiple sources of information to search and self-correct
- Figures out longer words while reading for meaning
- Rereads to figure out words, self-correct, or improve phrasing and expression
- Rereads to search for meaning
- Recognizes most words quickly and automatically
- Moves quickly through the text
- Reads fluently, with phrasing
- Talks about ideas in the text and relates them to his/her experiences and to other texts

### Level G (DRA 12)

**Text Descriptions**
- Sentences are longer with many embedded clauses
- Several high frequency words which increase in difficulty
- Large number of decodable words with regular and irregular patterns
- Several episodes with a variety of characters
- Ideas and vocabulary are more challenging with some specialized vocabulary
- Story line is carried by the text
- Pictures support and extend meaning
- Readers are expected to remember information and action over a longer reading time

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Reads fluently and rapidly, with appropriate phrasing
- Follows print with eyes, occasionally using finger at points of difficulty
- Notices and uses punctuation to assist smooth reading
- Recognizes most words quickly and automatically
- Uses sound/letter relationships, known words, and word parts to figure out words
- Uses meaning, visual information, and language syntax to figure out words
- Rereads to search for meaning
- Remembers details to support the accumulation of meaning throughout the text

### Level H (DRA 14)

**Text Descriptions**
- Language is not repetitious
- Full range of high frequency words
- Size and placement of print varies widely
- Some repeated episodes
- Content moves away from familiar experiences
- Genres include realistic fiction, fantasy, folktales, and nonfiction (informational texts)
- Characters tend to learn and change

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Reads frequently and rapidly with appropriate phrasing
- Follows the text with eyes, using finger only at points of particular difficulty
- Notices and uses punctuation to assist smooth reading
- Recognizes most words rapidly
- Uses sound/letter relationships, known words, and word parts to figure out new words
- Uses meaning, visual information, and language syntax to solve problems
- Rereads phrases to figure out words, self-correct, or improve phrasing
**Level I (DRA 16)**

**Text Descriptions**
- Multiple episodes are highly elaborated
- Most text lengths are about the same as G and H (ten to thirty pages) but have smaller print size
- Some longer texts have thirty to forty pages
- Texts use a great deal of dialogue
- Pictures enhance meaning but provide little support for precise word solving and meaning
- Complex word solving is required with multi-syllable words
- Paragraphs and sentences are longer
- Readers transition to texts that may call for sustaining interest and meaning over several reading sessions
- Some chapter-like books
- Most books are narrative (realistic fiction, fantasy, and folktales) with a plot and solution
- Informational books are shorter with more difficult content
- Characters and story events require interpretation

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Actively figures out new words using a range of strategies
- Follows print with eyes
- Reads fluently, slowing down to figure out new words and then resuming speed
- Begins to silently read some of the text
- In oral reading, rereads some works of phrases to self-correct or improve expression
- Rereads to search for meaning
- Flexibly uses meaning, language syntax, and visual information to figure out new words and to monitor reading
- Self-corrects errors that cause lack of meaning
- Rereads when necessary to self-correct, but not as a habit
- Demonstrates understanding of the story and character
- Goes beyond the text in discussions and interpretations
- Sustains problem-solving and development of meaning through a longer text and two-or-three day period

**Level J (DRA 18)**

**Text Descriptions**
- Stories have similar characteristics to level I but are generally longer (some over fifty pages)
- First chapter books
- Characters in series books will expand interest in reading, increasing the amount of time spent in reading
- Large amount of dialogue
- Full range of punctuation within longer, more complex sentences with many adjectives and adverbs
- Texts have one main plot with several episodes over a period of time – chapter books may or may not cover a period of one day
- Requires more interpretation on the part of the reader
- Requires quick solving of new words, including three or four syllables

**Behavior to Notice and Support**
- Uses multiple sources of information to process text smoothly
- Uses multiple strategies to figure out new words while focusing on meaning
- Analyzes words from left to right, using knowledge of sound/letter relationships
- Uses known words and word parts to figure out new words
- Reads fluently, slowing down to figure out new words and then resuming speed
- Flexibly uses meaning, language syntax, and visual information to monitor reading
- Self-corrects errors that cause loss of meaning
- Rereads when necessary to self-correct, but not as a habit
- Rereads to search for meaning
- Demonstrates understanding of the story and characters
- Goes beyond the text in discussions and interpretations
- Sustains problem-solving and development of meaning through a longer text read over several days
- Silently reads sections of text
### Level K (DRA 20)

**Text Descriptions**
- Includes longer, slightly more complex chapter books with more characters
- Books have one plot, but many episodes are carried over a period of time
- Shorter books have more difficult vocabulary (not often used in speech by children), challenging content, or more complex themes
- Genres include realistic fiction, fantasy, and nonfiction (informational texts)
- Some fables or legends and historical fiction may be included (not requiring extensive background knowledge to understand)
- Large amount of dialogue used to determine what is going on in the plot
- Characters show various perspectives
- Illustrations are placed throughout the text and are used to enhance enjoyment and helps students visualize
- Readers explore the various connotations of words

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Integrates multiple sources of information while reading with fluency
- When reading orally, reads rapidly, with phrasing, slowing down to problem solve and then resuming speed
- Reads silently much of the time
- Demonstrates understanding of the text after silent reading
- Makes inferences, predicts, and analyzes character and plot
- Flexibly uses multiple word-solving strategies while focusing on meaning
- Goes beyond the text in understandings of problems and characters
- Demonstrates facility in interpreting the text
- Sustains attention to meaning and interpretation of a longer text read over several days

### Level L (DRA 24)

**Text Descriptions**
- Integrates multiple sources of information while reading with fluency
- When reading orally, reads rapidly, with phrasing
- Reads orally, with accuracy, not stopping to self-correct in the interest of fluency and phrasing
- In oral reading, uses multiple word-solving strategies with longer words
- Reads silently most of the time
- Demonstrates understanding and facility in interpreting the text after silent reading
- After reading longer sections of a text, predicts events, outcomes, problems resolutions, and character changes
- Makes connections between the text read and other books
- Sustains attention to meaning and interpretation of a longer text read over several days

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Includes chapter books with fewer illustrations and complex picture books
- Texts contain many multisyllable and technical words
- Words are used for a range of connotative meanings
- Print size is varied but often much smaller
- Most sentences end in the middle of lines and continue from one line to the next
- Includes a full range of genres from realistic fiction to biography
- More characters are speaking with dialogue not always assigned
- Plots and characters are more sophisticated
- Characters develop and change in response to events in the story
- Events in chapters build on each other requiring the reader to recall and keep track of information

### Level M (DRA 28)

**Text Descriptions**
- Chapter books are longer texts (60 to 100 pages) with short chapters and few pictures
- Informational books are shorter with new information and text features
- Includes a full range of genres with more biographies included
- Text have subtle meanings that require interpretation and more background knowledge
- More complex and expanded plots
- More complex themes (i.e. Respect for difference, loneliness, independence)

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Uses multiple sources of information to figure out words rapidly while focusing on meaning
- Flexibly applies word-solving strategies to more complex, multisyllabic words
- Demonstrates facility in interpreting text while reading orally, with fluency and phrasing
- Reads orally with high accuracy in most instances, not stopping to self-correct errors in the interest of fluency and phrasing
- Reads silently, except during assessment or to demonstrate text
### Level N (DRA 30)

**Text Descriptions**
- Chapter books are usually one hundred or more pages with short chapters and memorable characters
- Nonfiction titles are generally shorter and may present social issues
- Topics of informational books and settings for narratives go well beyond reader's personal experiences
- Complex picture books illustrate themes and build experience in character interpretation
- More demand on the reader to use a variety of strategies to understand plot, theme, and new vocabulary
- Writers use devices such as irony and whimsy to create interest and communicate the nature characters

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Uses multiple strategies to figure out new words quickly
- Demonstrates facility in text interpretation while reading orally, with fluency and phrasing
- Reads silently, except during assessment or when demonstrating text interpretation
- Remembers details from one section of text to the next
- Sustains attention to a longer text, remembering details and revising interpretations
- Notices how illustrations convey the author’s meaning
- Demonstrates sophisticated interpretation of characters and plot
- Makes connections among a wide variety of texts
- Goes beyond the text to speculate on alternative meanings

### Level O (DRA34)

**Text Descriptions**
- Multiple characters are developed through what they say, think, and do or what others say about them
- Characters deal with everyday experiences or more serious problems such as war or death
- Genres expand to include historical and science fiction
- Chapter books have between fifty and two hundred pages
- Text have few illustrations- usually black and white drawings or photographs
- Highly complex sentences employ a wide range of punctuation necessary for understanding the text

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Solves words quickly and automatically while focusing on meaning
- Searches to understanding the subtle shades of meaning that words can convey
- Demonstrates facility in text interpretations while reading orally, with fluency and phrasing
- In oral reading, figures out new words rapidly while reading smoothly and expressively
- Sustains attention to a text read over several days, remembering details and revising interpretations as new events are encountered
- After reading silently, demonstrates understanding and sophistication in text interpretation
- Makes connections among texts to enhance interpretations
- Goes beyond the text to speculate on alternative meanings
- Shows the ability to summarize the text in writing
### Level P (DRA 38)

**Text Descriptions**
- Wide variety of fiction and nonfiction
- Fiction texts include novels with longer chapters
- Characters are often concerned with issues related to growing up and family relationship
- Settings are very detailed
- Information texts and biographies present complex ideas
- Topics may be unfamiliar
- Longer texts require readers to sustain interest and attention over several days
- Structural complexity, theme sophistication, and necessary background experience increase

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- When reading silently, reads rapidly and with attention to meaning
- Actively acquires new vocabulary through reading
- Demonstrates facility in text interpretation while reading orally, with fluency and phrasing
- In oral reading, figures out new words rapidly while reading smoothly and expressively
- Sustains attention to a text read over many days, remembering details and revising interpretations as new events are encountered
- Demonstrates interest in reading an extended text over a longer time period
- After reading silently, demonstrates understanding and sophistication in interesting meaning
- Compares the text with other books in an analytic way
- Goes beyond the text to speculate on alternative meanings
- Shows the ability to summarize and extend the text in writing

### Level Q (DRA 40)

**Text Descriptions**
- Wide variety of fiction and nonfiction
- Fiction texts include novels with longer chapters
- Characters are often concerned with issues related to growing up and family relationship
- Settings are very detailed
- Information texts and biographies present complex ideas
- Topics may be unfamiliar
- Longer texts require readers to sustain interest and attention over several days
- May have more mature themes focusing on problems of society as they affect children
- Texts contain difficult words to solve, often including words from other languages

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Reads rapidly, with attention to meaning, when reading silently
- Actively acquires new vocabulary through reading
- Demonstrates facility in text interpretation while reading orally, with fluency and phrasing
- In oral reading, figures out new words rapidly while reading smoothly and expressively
- Sustains attention to a text read over many days, remembering details and revising interpretations as new events are encountered
- Demonstrates interest in reading an extended text over a longer time period
- Demonstrates interest in reading shorter literary texts
- Uses illustrations to help analyze text meaning
- After reading silently, demonstrates understanding and sophistication in interpreting meaning
- Compares the text with other books in an analytic way
- Goes beyond the text to speculate on alternative meanings
- Shows the ability to summarize and extend the text in writing

### Level R (DRA 40)

**Text Descriptions**
- Fiction and nonfiction texts represent a range of times in history
- Wider variety of texts
- Sophisticated vocabulary requires an understanding of connotative shadings of meaning
- Literary devices such as simile and metaphor require background

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Reads rapidly, both orally and silently, while focusing on meaning
- Actively acquires new vocabulary while reading
- Sustains attention to a text read over many days, remembering details and revising interpretations as new events are encountered
- Demonstrates interest in reading an extended text over a longer time
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level S (DRA 40)</th>
<th>Level T (DRA 50)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Text Descriptions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Text Descriptions</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Technical aspects of texts requires background knowledge</td>
<td>- Include a variety of genres and text structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Nature themes include family problems, war, and death</td>
<td>- Chapter books are long, with few illustrations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Readers must connect concepts and themes to political and historical events or environment information</td>
<td>- Readers need to recognize symbolism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Knowledge period</td>
<td>- Texts contain many sophisticated, multi-syllable words that readers will need to analyze in terms of both literal and connotative meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Nature themes include family problems, war, and death</td>
<td>- Readers need more prior knowledge of political and historical events and about the problem of different culture and racial groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Readers must connect concepts and themes to political and historical events or environment information</td>
<td>- Themes include growing up, demonstrating courage, and experiencing hardship and prejudice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Knowledge period</td>
<td><strong>Behaviors to Notice and Support</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Extends the text in various ways, including through research</td>
<td>- Reads rapidly, both orally and silently, with attention to meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Demonstrates interest and ability in interpreting shorter selections</td>
<td>- In oral and silent reading, figures out new words automatically and easily interprets word meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Uses illustrations to help analyze text meaning</td>
<td>- Sustains attention to a text read over many days, remembering details and revising interpretations as new events are encountered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- After reading silently, demonstrates understanding and sophistication in interpreting meaning</td>
<td>- Demonstrates interest and ability in interpreting shorter selections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Uses comparison with other texts to assist interpretation</td>
<td>- Demonstrates flexibility in reading many different kinds of texts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Goes beyond the text to interpret characters’ thoughts and feelings and to speculate on alternative meanings</td>
<td>- After reading silently, demonstrates understanding and sophistication in interpreting meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Demonstrates all interpretive and analytic skills in writing</td>
<td>- Goes beyond the text to interpret characters’ thoughts and feelings and to speculate on alternative meanings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Extends text meaning through research, writing, or the arts</td>
<td>- Demonstrates all analytic and interpretive skills in writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Extends text meaning through research, writing, or the arts</td>
<td>- Extends and demonstrates understanding of the text through public speaking, research, or the arts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Level U (DRA 50)

**Text Descriptions**
- Informational texts cover a wide range of topics and present specific technical information
- Illustrations require interpretation and connection to the text
- Narratives are complex with plots and subplots
- Texts have several different themes and characters
- Readers need to understand symbolism and themes which are more abstract
- Creative texts formats are used

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Notices graphic illustrations and gets information from them
- Synthesizes information from graphic information with the body of the text
- Uses the table of contents to help in understanding the organization of the text
- Grasps “layers” of meaning in a story; for example, specific understandings plus the “bigger picture”
- Reads, understands, and appreciates literary language
- Interprets illustrations and their connections to the text
- Keeps up with several different themes and many characters
- Interprets characters’ motives and the influences on their development
- Recognizes and appreciates a wide range of genres, both fiction and nonfiction
- Notices and uses a full range of punctuation, including more rarely used forms such as dashes
- Learns technical words from reading
- Uses reading to learn about self and others

### Level V (DRA 50)

**Text Descriptions**
- Biographies go beyond simple narratives to provide significant amount of historical information and focus on harsh themes and difficult periods of history
- Science fiction presents sophisticated ideas and concepts
- Texts require readers to think critically
- Full appreciation of the texts requires noticing aspects of the writer’s craft
- Texts have print in a small font
- Novels may be two hundred to three hundred pages long

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Understands and talks about complex themes, analyzing them and applying them to current life situations
- Understands many different perspectives that are encountered in fiction and nonfiction texts
- Evaluates both fiction and nonfiction texts for their authenticity and accuracy
- Deals with mature topics such as death, war, prejudice, and courage
- Thinks critically about and discusses the content of a literary work or the quality of writing
- Notices aspects of the writer’s craft and looks at the text from a writer’s point of view
- Sustains attention and thinking over the reading of texts that are long and have smaller fonts
- Tries new genres, topics, and authors, and is able to compare them with known genres, topics, and authors
- Makes connections across texts to notice an author’s style or technique
- Understands symbolism in both realistic fiction and fantasy; discusses what symbols mean in terms of today’s society
- Brings prior knowledge to bear in understanding literary references
- Learns technical language and concepts through reading
- Learns about self and others through reading, especially about societies that are different from one’s own
### Level W (DRA 50)

**Text Descriptions**
- Themes explore the human condition
- Fiction and nonfiction text present characters who suffer hardship and learn from it
- Writing is sophisticated, with complex sentences, literary language, and symbolism
- Text have print in a small font
- Readers must have an awareness of social and political issues to comprehend texts
- Fantasy and science fiction introduce heroic character, moral questions, and contests between good and evil
- Informational texts may present complex graphic information and require a wide range of content knowledge
- Readers must understand all the basic nonfiction organizational structures
- Narrative biographies include many details and prompt readers to make inferences about what motivated the subject’s achievements

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Sustains reading over longer and more complex texts; is not intimidated by varying layouts and styles of print
- Builds understanding of a wide variety of human problems
- Uses reading to expand awareness of people who are different from oneself
- Understands and learns from characters’ experiences
- Learns about self and others through reading; actively seeks understanding of people different from oneself by culture, period of history, or other variation
- Deals with mature themes such as prejudice, war, death, survival, and poverty, and is able to discuss them in relation to one’s own experiences
- Understands the complexities of human characters as they develop and change; discusses one’s own point of view and relationship to characters
- Integrates understandings derived from graphic illustrations and the text
- Expands world knowledge through reading
- Flexibly and automatically uses tools such as glossary, references index, credentials for authors, legends, charts, and diagrams

### Level X

**Text Descriptions**
- Science fiction at this level incorporates technical knowledge as well as high fantasy depicting quests and the struggle between good and evil
- Readers are required to go beyond the literal meaning of the text to construct implied meaning by a writer’s use of symbolism
- There is a continuing increase in the sophistication of vocabulary, language, and topic

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Sustains attention over longer texts with more abstract, mature, and complex themes
- Notices, understands, and discusses a wide range of literary devices such as flashbacks and stories within stories
- Deals with mature themes, such as family relationships, death, social injustice, and the supernatural
- Appreciates, understands, and discusses irony and satire
- Uses descriptive text as a way to understand settings and their importance to the plot or character development
- Discusses the setting as an element of the text, deciding whether it is important or unimportant
- Flexibly and automatically uses tools such as glossary, references index, credentials for authors, legends, charts, and diagrams
- Notices aspects of the author’s craft, including the way characters are described and presented as “real”
- Talks about the text in an analytic way, including finding specific evidence of the author’s style
- Understands and is able to use the sophisticated, scholarly, and technical language that is found in informational texts
### Level Y

**Text Descriptions**
- Texts have subtle themes and complex plots
- Include a whole range of social problems as themes with more explicit details (e.g., details about death or prejudice)
- Texts include irony and satire, literary devices requiring readers to think beyond the literal meaning of the text
- Fantasies are complex, depicting hero figures and heroic journeys
- Readers are required to discern underlying lessons and analyze texts for traditional elements

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Understands and discusses subtle and complex plots and themes
- Understands, discusses, and deals with, in a mature manner

### Level Z

**Text Descriptions**
- Informational books deal with controversial social concepts and political issues and include detailed historical accounts of periods less well-known
- Readers learn new ways of finding technical information
- Informational texts include complex examples of the basic organizational structures
- Fiction texts explore a wide range of mature themes relative to the human condition
- Fantasy texts present heroic quests, symbolism, and complex characters
- Some texts present graphic detail of hardship and violence

**Behaviors to Notice and Support**
- Sustains reading and understanding over much longer texts
- Deals with a great range of texts—diaries to narratives to plays
- Switches easily from one genre to another, accessing knowledge of the structure and nature of the text while beginning to read
- Understands and discusses how a text “works” in terms of the writer’s organization
- Deals with controversial social and political issues, seeing multiple perspectives
- Uses reading to gain technical knowledge in a wide variety of areas
- Understands the symbolism in heroic quests; applies concepts encountered in fantasy to today’s life
- Flexibility and automatically uses tools such as glossary, references index, credentials for authors, legends, charts, and diagrams
- Deals with and discusses in a mature way graphic details such as accounts of brutality, hardship, or violence
- Notices, understands, appreciates, and discusses literary devices
- Understands and appreciates complex language, archaic language, and cultural motifs
- Learns about epilogues, bibliographies, and forewords
- Builds information across the text, even when very unusual formats are used (for example, brief interviews with many characters)
- Fully understands the subtle differences between fiction and nonfiction

*Sources: Leveled Books for Readers Grades 3-6 (Fountas & Pinnell) and Matching Books to Readers: Using Leveled Books in Guided Reading, K-3 (Fountas & Pinnell).*